

LUCY. Oh, Linus, I'm glad you're here. I'm conducting a survey and there are a few questions I'd like to ask you.

LINUS. Sure, go ahead.

LUCY. The first question is: on a scale of zero to one hundred, with a standard of fifty as average, seventy-five as above average and ninety as exceptional, where would you rate me with regards to crabbiness?

LINUS slowly turns to look at her.

LINUS. You're my big sister.

LUCY. That's not the question.

LINUS. No, but that's the answer.

LUCY. Come on, Linus, answer the question.

LINUS. *(getting up and facing Lucy)* Look, Lucy, I know very well that if I give any sort of an honest answer to that question you're going to slug me.

LUCY. Linus: a survey that is not based on honest answers is like a house that is built on a foundation of sand. Would I be spending my time to conduct this survey if I didn't expect complete candor in all the responses? I promise not to slug you. Now what number would you give me as your crabbiness rating?

LINUS. *(after a few moments of interior struggle)* Ninety-five.

LUCY sends a straight jab to Linus' face which lays him out flat.

LUCY. It's a woman's prerogative to change her mind.

LUCY stalks off. Lighting changes to downstage area, the rest of the stage growing dim. She walks into the light and sits, figuring to herself on her clipboard.

Now I add these two columns and that gives me my answer.

LUCY figures energetically, then finally sits up with satisfaction.

There, it's all done. Now, let's see what we've got.

LUCY begins to scan the page. A look of trouble skims over her face. She becomes more intense. Her eternal look of self-confidence has crumbled.

LUCY. *(continuing)* It's true. I'm a crabby person. I'm a very crabby person and everybody knows it. I've been spreading crabbiness everywhere I go. I'm a super crab. It's a wonder anyone will still talk to me. It's a wonder I have any friends at all—or even associates. I've done nothing but make life miserable for everyone. I've done nothing but breed unhappiness and resentment. Where did I go wrong? How could I be so selfish? How could ...

LINUS, *who overhears this, comes over to Lucy and sits down beside her.*

LINUS. What's wrong, Lucy?

LUCY. Don't talk to me, Linus. I don't deserve to be spoken to. I don't deserve to breathe the air I breathe. I'm no good, Linus. I'm no good.

LINUS. That's not true, Lucy.

LUCY. Yes, it is. I'm no good, and there's no reason at all why I should go on living on the face of this earth.

LINUS. Yes there is.

LUCY. Name one. Just tell me one single reason why I should still deserve to go on living on this planet.

LINUS. Well, for one thing you have a little brother who loves you.

LUCY looks at Linus in dead silence and then breaks out in loud sobs.

Every now and then I say the right thing. *(music in)*

No. 17c Quick Change – A Loving Little Brother

(Orchestra)

LUCY and LINUS exit together.

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The Glee Club rehearsal room – music out for dialogue.

SCHROEDER. *(entering with SALLY)* Of course it's surprising, but I'm sure Lucy knows now she can't be crabby anymore —

SALLY. Anymore.

SCHROEDER. Where is everybody? I told them to be here.